

Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-19

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FM AMEMBASSY VIENNA

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S E C R E T VIENNA 10116

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR: BUNDESWEHR REORGANIZATION AND MBFR

FROM U.S. REP MBFR

REF: A. BONN 18385 B. VIENNA 9983

1. SUMMARY. THE FRG FORCE REORGANIZATION PLAN RECENTLY ANNOUNCED RAISES SEVERAL UNCERTAINTIES AND POTENTIAL PROBLEMS RELATED TO MBFR. IN PARTICULAR, IT IS NOT CLEAR WHETHER THE "READY RESERVE" TO BE CREATED WOULD BE COUNTED AS ACTIVE FORCES SUBJECT TO THE COMMON CEILING OR AS RESERVE FORCES EXEMPT FROM IT. MOREOVER, THE SIZE OF THE GROUND FORCE PORTION OF THE READY READY RESERVE, AND THE TIMING OF ITS CREATION, ARE STILL UNCERTAIN. END SUMMARY.

2. THE U.S. MBFR DELEGATION IN VIENNA HAS BEEN EXAMINING THE MBFR IMPLICATIONS OF THE BUNDESWEHR REORGANIZATION

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AS ANNOUNCED IN BONN (REF A) AND NOTED IN THE AD HOC GROUP

(REF B). MANY DETAILS ABOUT THE PROPOSED REORGANIZATION ARE NOT YET FULLY KNOWN, IF INDEED THEY HAVE BEEN DECIDED. THE "NEW FORM OF READY RESERVE", TO BE ABOUT 30,000 MEN, REPRESENTS THE KEY MBFR-RELATED QUESTION.

3. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT ALTHOUGH THE NUMBER OF 30,000 MEN FOR THIS RESERVE HAS BEEN WIDELY MENTIONED BY GERMAN SPOKESMEN, IT DOES NOT APPEAR IN THE WRITTEN PUBLIC VERSION OF THE PAPER, NOR IN THAT GIVEN TO THE NAC. IT IS POSSIBLE, THEREFORE, THAT 30,000 IS ONLY A CURRENT PLANNING FIGURE WHICH MIGHT BE SUBJECT TO LATER CHANGE. THE EVIDENCE AVAILABLE IN VIENNA, HOWEVER, DOES NOT MAKE CLEAR HOW MANY OF THE 30,000 WILL IN FACT BE GROUND FORCES OR WHAT THE REDUCTION IN ACTUAL, AS OPPOSED TO AUTHORIZED, ACTIVE DUTY STRENGTH WILL BE. FRG DELEGATION HERE HAS INDICATED THAT TESTS OF CADRE CONCEPT WILL PRECEDE AND INFLUENCE EXTENT AND MODES OF IMPLEMENTATION.

4. THE GOVERNMENT STATEMENT IS, OF COURSE, A POLITICAL DOCUMENT INTENDED TO BE READ BY DIFFERENT AUDIENCES. ON THE ONE HAND IT STRESSED THAT THE "READY RESERVE" REPRESENTS "NOT RESERVE FORCES BUT OPERATIONAL FORCES," SUGGESTING THAT FOR PURPOSES OF MEETING NATO GOALS AND FOR PUBLIC OPINION THESE WILL BE TREATED AS IF THEY WERE ACTIVE FORCES. IF THIS TURNS OUT TO BE THE CASE, AND IF THIS IS APPLIED TO MBFR, THEN MBFR WOULD NOT BE AFFECTED (EXCEPT AS THE GERMAN COMPONENT OF THE 777,000 GROUND FORCE FIGURE MAY CHANGE FOR OTHER REASONS) AND THE GERMANS WOULD HAVE THE OPTION OF MAINTAINING A SOMEWHAT LOWER ACTIVE STRENGTH, AND OF PLACING THE READY RESERVE ON ACTIVE DUTY AT ANY TIME WITHOUT POSING ANY PROBLEMS FOR A MANPOWER CEILING THAT MIGHT BE AGREED IN MBFR.

5. ON THE OTHER HAND, SOME OF THE AMBIGUITIES SUGGEST THAT THE GERMANS MAY WISH TO RETAIN THE OPTION OF COUNTING THE GROUND FORCE PORTION OF THE READY RESERVE AS AN MBFR REDUCTION. THIS WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY RAISE QUESTIONS WITH THE EAST ABOUT THE TREATMENT OF

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RESERVES IN GENERAL AND SINCE IN PHASE II OF THE WESTERN PLAN THE ALLIES COULD REDUCE AS LITTLE AS 18,000 INSTEAD OF 48,000 TO REACH A COMMON CEILING OF 700,000. (TO THE EXTENT THE GERMAN RESERVE IS SEEN AS A PRE-MBFR REDUCTION, QUESTIONS MAY ALSO BE RAISED WITHIN THE U.S. CONGRESS.)

6. STILL ANOTHER UNCERTAINTY CONCERNS TIMING, SINCE

THE FRG GOVERNMENT STATEMENT APPEARS TO PUT THE ACTUAL CHANGE IN THE STATUS OF THE 30,000 MEN IN THE READY RESERVE OFF TO A DATE SOME DISTANCE IN THE FUTURE; THE NEW STRUCTURE WOULD BE BASED ON LEGISLATION PASSED IN 1974 AND IMPLEMENTED STEP BY STEP FOR COMPLETION BY 1978. ALTHOUGH MBFR PHASE I IS ENVISAGED AS INVOLVING ONLY U.S. GROUND FORCES ON THE WESTERN SIDE, THE QUESTION OF HOW THE NEW GERMAN RESERVE WILL BE COUNTED IN PHASE II IS LIKELY TO ARISE PRIOR TO THE DEFINITIVE NEGOTIATIONS ABOUT A COMMON CEILING. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT THE 1978 DATE MIGHT BE READ OR MISREAD BY THE SOVIETS AS HAVING DELIBERATELY BEEN PLACED OUTSIDE THE TIME FRAME OF THEIR PROPOSALS, THUS FURTHER OBSCURING THE GERMAN WILLINGNESS TO REDUCE.

7. IT IS HOPED THAT ADDRESSEES WILL BE ABLE TO PROVIDE FURTHER DETAILS TO CLARIFY SOME OF THESE IMPORTANT QUESTIONS. WE OF COURSE WANT TO AVOID GETTING INTO ANY INTERNATIONAL DISCUSSION AT THIS TIME OF DETAILS OF POSSIBLE MBFR PHASE II REDUCTIONS. NEVERTHELESS, FROM THE STANDPOINT OF U.S. GOVERNMENT PLANNING, IT SEEMS PRUDENT TO HAVE AN EARLY ASSESSMENT OF ALL THE AVAILABLE INFORMATION BEARING ON THE QUESTION. WE UNDERSTAND FROM VARIOUS REPORTS THAT THE QUESTION OF TIMING OF THE REORGANIZATION IN RELATIONSHIP TO MBFR WAS A CONTROVERSIAL ONE IN BONN, BUT THAT THE MOD WAS DETERMINED FOR BUDGETARY AND DOMESTIC POLITICAL REASONS TO PRESS AHEAD. IT MAY BE, THEREFORE, THAT THE GERMANS THEM-

SELVES HAVE NOT DECIDED HOW BEST TO TREAT THEIR RESERVE FOR MBFR PURPOSES AND ARE, IN EFFECT, TRYING TO KEEP THEIR OPTIONS OPEN. IF THIS IS THE CASE, WASHINGTON MAY WANT TO ASK FOR OFFICIAL CLARIFICATIONS AT A SUITABLY
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HIGH LEVEL, SINCE COMPLICATIONS CAN BE FORESEEN FOR THE NEGOTIATIONS. MOREOVER, WE BELIEVE THAT THE QUESTION WILL ARISE, IN CONGRESS, IF NOT ELSEWHERE, AS TO WHETHER THE GERMANS ARE PLANNING A UNILATERAL REDUCTION INCONSISTENT WITH THE U.S. COMMITMENT NOT TO MAKE UNILATERAL REDUCTIONS DURING MBFR NEGOTIATIONS. HUMES

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